



## *The President's Daily Brief*

*23 January 1971*

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

23 January 1971

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

On *Page 1* we comment on the Communist attacks near Phnom Penh yesterday morning.

Elements of North Vietnam's 312th Division continue to move westward in the Plaine des Jarres area.  
(*Page 2*)

On *Page 3* we discuss what appears to be a changing relationship between Poland's leaders and the Polish people.

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CAMBODIA

*The Communists' attacks yesterday against the Phnom Penh airfield and other targets near the city are a major departure in their tactics in Cambodia. For the past ten months they have avoided taking the war directly to the capital, although they clearly have had the capability of doing so.*

*Although additional hit-and-run attacks on important targets in and around Phnom Penh can be expected, there are still no signs that the Communists are in a position to attack the city itself in force. The closest known Communist main force unit to Phnom Penh is the North Vietnamese 96th Artillery Regiment, which intercepts located 25 miles east-northeast of the capital on 20 January.*

The government is taking increased security precautions to protect Pochentong Airfield and the city's power plants and petroleum depots. Sweep operations are under way in the outlying areas from which yesterday's mortar and sapper attacks were mounted. Lon Nol told Ambassador Swank yesterday that he plans to reinforce the capital's defenses with a trusted brigade of Khmer Krom troops currently involved in the Route 4 operation and with other troops now in the Skoun area.

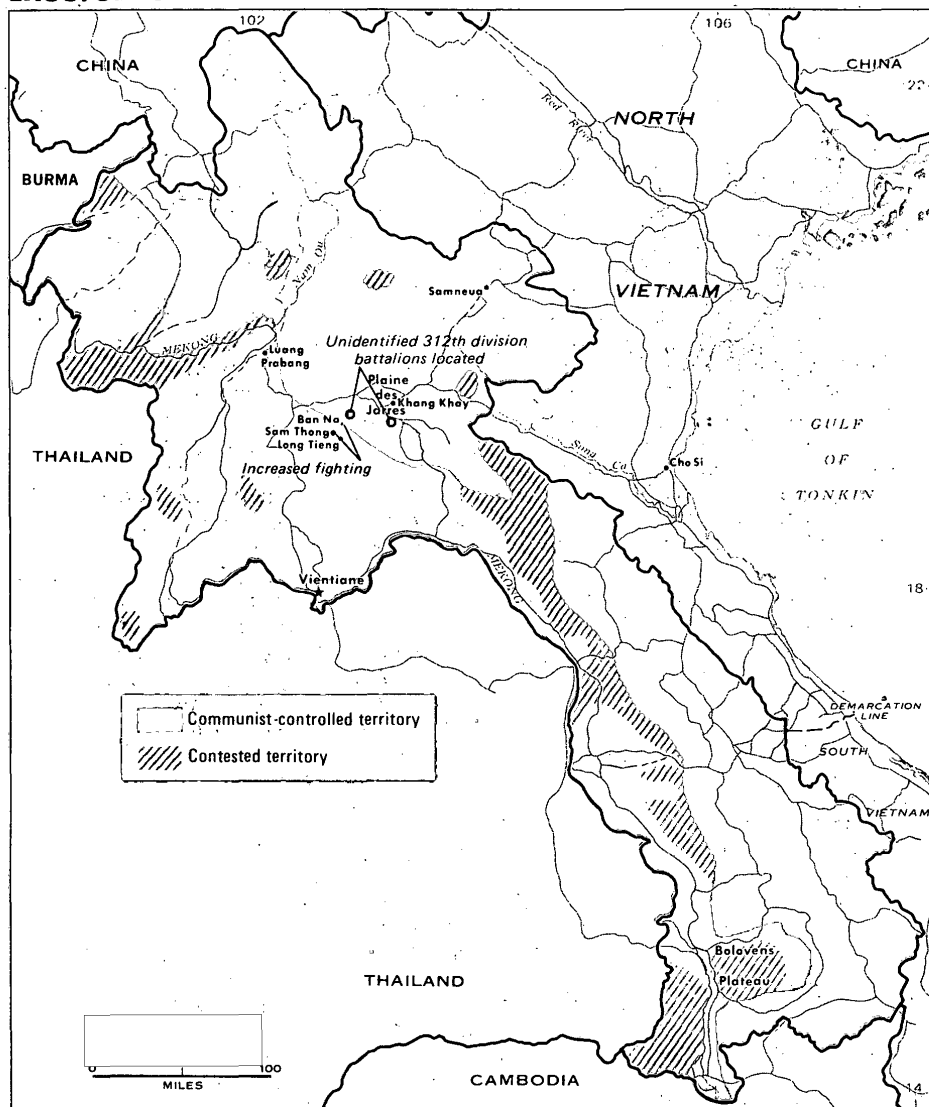
*Even in the face of these measures, the Communists can still make things a good deal tougher in the city if they are determined to shake the resolve of the Cambodian leadership or to bring into question the continuing viability of the Lon Nol regime. Some lower ranking military officers are already looking for scapegoats.*

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# **LAOS: Current Situation**



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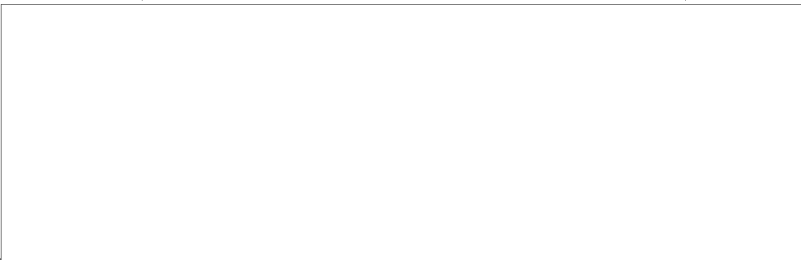
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LAOS

An unidentified battalion of North Vietnam's 312th Division is now located west of the Plaine des Jarres. Another unidentified battalion, possibly associated with the division's 209th Regiment, now is located just south of Route 4 near the eastern edge of the Plaine. Elements of the division's 165th Regiment have asked a regiment of the 316th Division west of the Plaine for substantial quantities of ammunition, food, and medical supplies.

*Elements of the 312th Division began passing through the Cho Si transshipment area in North Vietnam only a little more than two weeks ago. This rapid movement suggests that the Communists may hope to launch a campaign against the Long Tieng complex somewhat earlier than late February, the time of last year's drive. It is also possible that units of the 312th will spell units of the 316th Division, which has been on the front line continuously for almost two years. Last year the 312th was principally involved in rear-area operations, while the 316th made the major attack toward Long Tieng.*

In the last several days fighting has increased south and west of the Plaine, with a number of probes and skirmishes around Ban Na and Sam Thong. On 21 January, Communist forces overran a 40-man government outpost about eight miles northwest of Ban Na.



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## POLAND

*The relationship between Poland's leaders and the populace appears to be in an important period of transition. The new leadership, not wishing to risk the resumption of violent disorders, has renounced force as a way of responding to the people's demands. Instead, it appears to have made a conscious decision to allow grievances, many of long standing, to surface and be catalogued for correction.*

*This decision has meant the tacit acceptance of work slowdowns and the consequent loss of production as the legitimate bargaining tools of the workers. There have been no reports of penalties being imposed on workers involved in such actions, and security authorities and the police have kept a low profile since the end of the riots. The only demands made on the workers by the controlled press--and these have not been rigidly defined--have been that criticisms and calls for changes be constructive and feasible.*

*The new leaders' style seems to have given the Polish people a new sense of self-assurance. The workers on the Baltic coast exhibit an ever-growing confidence that the time has come, after years of tolerance on their part, to correct many of the faults endemic to Gomulka's leadership. If they did not have hopes of convincing the new leaders that this must be done, they would not be negotiating with local authorities and the new officials in Warsaw. Rather they would by now either have returned to sullen apathy or renewed rioting.*

*There also are signs that the workers' new-found pluckiness has spread to other strata of society. Students in Szczecin, for example, have recently demanded better conditions for study and life. The Polish people do not have wild revolutionary ambitions, but they have demonstrated a strong need to vent pent-up frustrations and to seek real improvements within the system. Poland's new leaders seem to recognize that it would be imprudent to block this safety valve at this time.*

*The dangers for the new leaders in such a course are obvious, and they have not hidden their need for time to plan changes, assign priorities, and find the proper people to carry out reforms. Their low-key approach indicates not only a desire gradually to restore calm, but also the pressure of time. There are fresh reports that the party central committee will meet next week in a pivotal session.*

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**CUBA-GUATEMALA**



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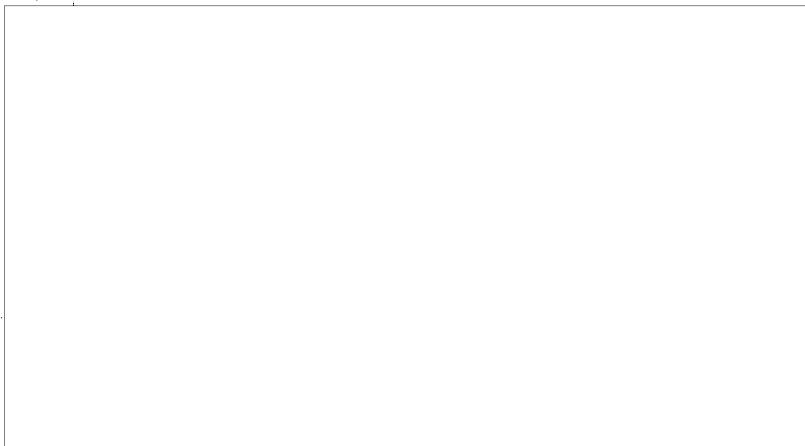


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JORDAN

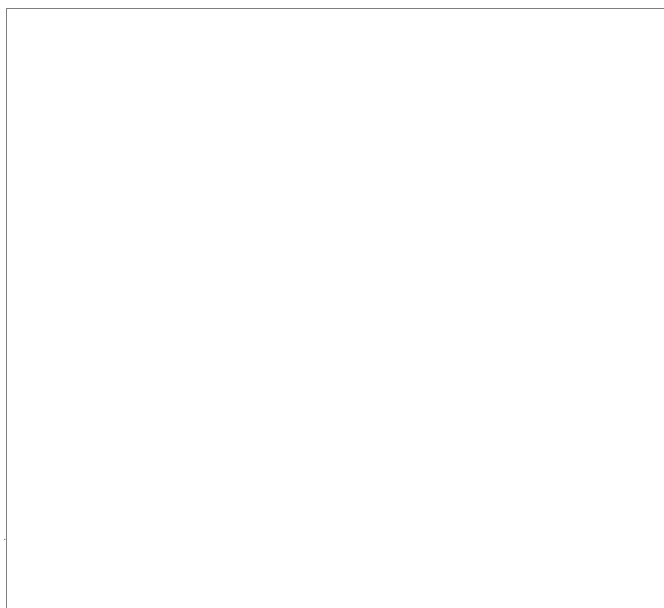


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